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Sugar Plantations.



Efore *England* had any Sugar Plantations of its own , *Portugal* had about Four Hundred Thousand Pounds *per Annum* for Sugar from *England* , to the great Inriching of *Portugal* and Impoverishing of *England*.

The *Portugeeze* having set High Customs upon their Sugars , and letting none Trade at *Brasil* but themselves, gave the *English* Encouragement to Adventure upon Planting it, who have so increased, that they not only Supply *England* with all the Sugar it wants, whereby 400000*l.* paid *Portugal* formerly for Sugar is saved; but great Quantities of Sugars have been Transported to Foreign Markets, to the vast increase of the Wealth of the Kingdom, and by consequence the value of the Lands of *England*.

In the Trade to the *English* Sugar Plantations , about 400 Sail of *English* Ships and 8000 Seamen are annually Employed.

All the Ships that go from *England* are Loaden with Manufactures and Provisions for the Supply of the Plantations, with Cloaths, Tools, and Utenfils, and Victual , which all pay Custom to the King outward , and on which many Families in *England* do subsist. The

The Planters have at their Cost, brought above 100000 Negroes from *Affrica*, whereby so many New Subjects are added to the Crown.

The *French King* taking Notice of the great Wealth and Strength the Sugar Plantations bring to the Kingdom of *England*, and also of the difficulties the *English Plantations* are under, by reason of the Acts of Trade and Navigation, which enjoinning all the Sugars of the *English Plantations* to be brought home to *England*, and there to be Landed, and pay the King a Custom before it can be Transported to any Forreign Markets, which is a great Charge, hath thought it feazible, and with great Application hath set himself to become Master of that Trade; and the *Dutch* have done the same, and granting more ease to their Planters, in producing and disposing of their Sugars, than the *English* have, the *French* are so far increased, that their Sugar Plantations, which are *Martinico, Guadeloupe, Marigalant, Grenados, St. Christophers, Kayan*, and part of *Hispaniola*, do already find an Employment for Two hundred Sail of Ships, and Seamen proportionable, and are increasing daily: And the *Dutch* have already many Ships annually Loaden with Sugar from *Surinam*, which they make a Business of State to Improve.

This Increase of the Sugar Trade of the *French* and *Dutch*, hath brought those Sugars that were worth between 5 and 6 *l.* the Hundred Weight, when the last *Book of Rates* was made, to be worth now not above 35 *s.* out of which the Planter pays 5 *s.* Custom, and 4½ per Hundred to the King in the Plantations; insomuch that an Estate that was formerly worth 2000 *l. per Annum* in the Plantations, is not now worth 600 *l. per Annum*; and if any further Imposition be laid, will yield little or nothing, to the undoing many Thousand *English* Families, many of which reside in *England*; for which Reason the Plan-

Planters intended to have Address'd to this *Parliament*, for reducing the *Book of Rates* to the present *Value* of *Sugars*.

This low Value of the Commodity causes the Inhabitants of the *English Colonies* to forsake them, and remove to other places, whilst the King of *France* useth all Imaginable Industry to strengthen and fill his Plantations; (some of which are in sight of ours) with Inhabitants, having made *Dunkirk* a Free Port for his own Sugars, where no Customs are paid in or out; by reason of which the Markets of *Flanders* and *Holland*, &c. are furnished with *French Sugars* at 2 s. 6 d. per Hundred cheaper than the *English* can, by reason of the Acts of Trade and Navigation.

This Increase of the Strength of the *French Plantations* and decrease of the *English*, hath made many of the Planters consider of with-drawing their Stocks, for fear if a War should happen with *France* all would be lost.

The *English* Sugar Trade being apparently decaying under the present Impositions upon Sugar, can by no means bear more and subsist; and it is of great advantage to *France* to have our Plantations ruined by more Impositions on their Sugars: for should the *French* gain the Sugar Trade from the *English*, *England* would lose the Employment of 400 Sail of Ships and 8000 Seamen, and *France* would gain it, which would differ the present Ballance of Seamen 16000, besides the loss of a Native Commodity, that hath brought so much Wealth to the Kingdom, and would also be the loss of the Trade of *Africa* for Negro's.

It hath been ever the Practice and Policy of Trading Nations, to set the Publick Taxes on Foreign Commodities and not those of their own growth.

In the time of the Usurper *Cromwell*, when all things
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were raked into to find a Revenue to support his Usurpation, no Excise was put on Sugars of the growth of the *English* Plantations.

England is an Island whose Wealth and Strength consists in Trade, which cannot be preserved but by being Master at Sea; and the Plantation Trade is near one half of the Navigation of *England*, and whether it be so convenient to hazard the loss of it by over-burthening it, since an Imposition may be set on Commodities of Foreign growth, that will be equivalent, is humbly submitted.

And whereas some seem to be of Opinion that an Imposition will fall upon the Buyer only, and not hurt the Planter, it is a Mistake for the Reasons following.

For it was found by Experience in the time of the late Rebellion, when there was an Excise imposed, the Buyer refused to buy Commodities of the Importer, unless he would clear the Excise, so that the Importer came generally to pay the Excise as well as the Customs. And it is well known that all Commodities are in Value as there is a greater or lesser quantity of them at the Market. If the Imposition doth not lessen the quantity of Sugar imported, it cannot raise the price, and then by consequence the Imposition must be born wholly by the Planter. If it doth lessen the quantity of Sugar imported, it lessens the Employment of our Shipping and Seamen, and the Kings Revenue, and will constrain those Planters who are forced to leave Making Sugar, to forsake the Plantations, as having no Employment there; which will so weaken them of Defendants, as they will be in hazard to become a prey to the *French* or their own Negro's; which will be a total loss of that Trade to this Kingdom, and be the ruin of many Thousand *English* Families, vvho in *England* and the Plantations subsisted by that Trade of making Sugar, or by furnishing Cloaths, Tools and Utenfils.

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